



Ursuline Links

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EDITORIAL

When The Well Runs Dry Despite The Heavy Rains

Nature teaches us some great lessons, if only we have time, a sense of wonder, and the curiosity for a contemplative gaze at it. That's because we are partially part of the cosmos. Mysteries of life that are beyond the grasp of our rational mind, at times come alive in a contemplative gaze at nature, and they tell us how to live and how to act.

Whispers of Nature

We all know that we are well into the monsoon season. It rains in many regions of the country. Our rivers and streams are overflowing, floods causing damage to lives and property. We also notice an enticing greenery all around us. The sight of awe-inspiring waterfalls and the cool breeze that carry the enthralling scent of the rain are truly refreshing. The flora and the fauna with the magnificent sheets of colour literally singing their enticing hymn of praise to the Creator. We enjoy all this beauty. And yet in the midst of all this we still find a few dry wells; cracked cisterns or cracked tanks and parched lake beds in some places. But more importantly there are dry and arid human hearts. And therefore the title '*when the wells run dry despite the heavy rains.*' What does nature teach us in and through such a phenomenon? Observing all this would give us an insight into what any human being would go through in his or her life. The dry or semi-dry wells that remain so in spite of the heavy rains all around could very well reflect our own interior and exterior situations in life and mission. In this context here are some points for our reflection and prayer: The '**well**' referred here stands for



our deep interior spiritual space from which we draw '**water**' for our sustenance, activity and growth. The water stands for the divine grace that motivates, strengthens, transforms, and changes us. It may be true that this well our interiority at times is empty and dry. We need to be aware of such situations and learn from nature some suitable remedies before it is too late. **Symptoms to know that our interior well is running dry?**

1) At the Personal Level:

a) An overall lack of zest and interest in life and mission.
b) Accepting negativity or negative and bitter attitudes in life.
c) Spending long hours of sleep, day dreaming or escaping into a fantasy world or the digital world.
d) Losing the lack of stamina within for the routine and sustained work, that also can be a symptom of an empty well within or deep-seated restlessness that resembles a diesel engine that runs out of lubricating oil and fuel making a lot of noise because the engine is running dry and that resembles also human situations when the interiority runs dry.

2. At the Communitarian Level:

a) Lack of real and deeper joy in common life or rivalry and competition rather than collaboration towards a common mission.
b) Breakdown of communication lines, negativity, destructive criticism, individualism and lack of readiness to carry each other's burden.

3. At a Wider Societal Level:

a) A greed driven, a lust-driven or a profit driven society.
b) Hardly any humanitarian consideration.
c) No respect for the weak and the helpless. These indicate that the common or collective soul of that society is experiencing a dry well.

Reasons for the well to run dry:

a) Lack of rain- Rain is the source of well springs. Rain relates earth to heaven. It's the medium through which the heavens nourish the earth and make it fertile. Rain in this context stands for a nourishing relationship with the Lord. If this relationship is not maintained on a regular basis in a deep and profound way soon our spiritual springs dry up.

b) A well running dry despite the torrential rains! How does it happen? Prophet Jeremiah in 2:13 articulates this situation very well” *For my people have committed two evils: they have forsaken Me the fountain of living water, and dug out cisterns for themselves, cracked cisterns that can hold no water.*”

It's not that there is no rain, that God is not gracious to Israel. But people have dug out their own tanks which are cracked and they can hardly hold any water.” *The one who does not gather with me, scatters- Mt 12:30.*” Gathering with the Lord means to have the Lord's perspective in gathering. The perspective tells us what is worth gathering. and what is mere thrash and needs to be discarded. Such trash gives rise to cracks in the tanks and such tanks cannot contain the life-giving water, the gift of the Holy Spirit and therefore the Lord says: *“The sprouted seed cannot grow and bear fruit if it is surrounded by thorns and thistles.”* The two reasons why the well runs dry is more output and very little input- meaning a burn-out situation, a lot of energy and resources but no replenishing or recharging of them. One finds time for everything in life except for recharging one's inner resources in the presence of the Lord. Alas! when the output exceeds the input by leaps and bounds, the well will certainly run dry.

c) Unskilled Diviners and Careless Drillers: Digging where there are no springs. A water diviner needs to pin-point accurately where the springs are and the water driller should make no mistake in reaching the springs.

A Greek word in the Gospels is '*Amartiya*' meaning 'missing the mark', or deviation from life. Do we sometimes look for life-giving waters in the wrong places? Searching for meaning and contentment is

ingrained in our hearts. Indeed our hearts are restless. They need to find their ultimate rest in God alone.

Remedies:

When we find the symptoms of our interior life running dry the following measures can be taken:

a) Dig trenches around the well so that the rain water may sink deep and recreate fresh springs. This stands for renewed attempts to expose ourselves for sufficiently prolonged periods of quality time to the reign of divine grace.

b) A Balanced output with the input. We cannot be wasting water when the sources are limited. In our day-to-day activities we must see that we are constantly replenished and recharged interiorly. Otherwise in the long run we could experience a physical, emotional and spiritual drain.

c) If one does not find contentment and meaning in life, one needs to check one's dimension of life, vision and spirituality. A truly Christian incarnational spirituality cannot remain confined to the so called “spiritual realm”. It means that an incarnational spirituality cannot be cut off from what happens in the political, social and cultural realms of our common living.

Conclusion: Those who believe in the real and radical involvement of God in human life and history, and believe in incarnation, that is God's moment in history with all its agony and ecstasy. Spirituality can never be a naively escapism from the real world. The authenticity of our spirituality is tested by its incarnational content- the capacity to address the real issues of life. It is that character of a spirituality that ensures a truly life-promoting spirituality.

Sr. Susanne

The Nativity of Mary

Birthday celebrations bring happiness to the (one who celebrates his/her birthday) as well as to family and friends. Next to the birth of Jesus, Mary's birth offers the greatest possible happiness to the church. Each time we celebrate her birth, we can confidently hope for an increase of peace in our hearts and in the world at large.

We honour Mary because we honour her son and worship him as our God and King. In the olden days the

mother of a king was highly regarded and respected, by virtue of having borne the king and taken care of him until he came of age and was capable of taking over and expressing his own authority as a king. Mary was born as a shrine for the creator, and through her obedience she fulfilled the purpose for which she was born.

As God had a plan for Mary, our birth too was not a mistake or accident. God has a plan for us. As Mary fulfilled her purpose on earth, we need to discover the purpose of our life and be faithful to it. We need also to respect the lives of others, for God has a plan for them too.

The birth of Mary holds a special place in my heart. Her arrival brings a sense of hope, purity and grace to our world. I am inspired by her unwavering faith and her willingness to embrace her divine purpose. Her birth signifies the beginning of a remarkable journey that will lead to the birth of Jesus, who will teach us about love, compassion and forgiveness. It reminds me that even in the midst of challenges one can find strength in faith and become a vessel of God's blessings.

Sr. Vanita



Feast of the Assumption

Pope Francis on 15 August, 2022 at the solemnity of Mary's Assumption said:

" At the conclusion of Her earthly life, Mother Mary was raised in soul and body to heaven, that is, in the glory of eternal life, in full communion with God."

The Pope further stated that it is beautiful to think that the humblest and the loftiest creature in history is the first to win heaven with her whole being - in soul and body. Mary lived most of her life within the domestic walls in ordinariness and humility. Although Mary had entered into heaven, it doesn't mean she is distanced or detached from us, but her Assumption should give us a beacon of eternal hope. This hope is a grace from God which is like the wings that carries us unto God. Mary, our beloved mother accompanies us, suffers with us and sings with us the songs of gratitude, humility and resilience on our life journey.

The feast of Assumption reminds us of a few significant lessons: all our struggles to remain faithful to God and His will however insignificant they may be, will bear abundant fruits. The flesh / body that has given life to God should never undergo corruption. In this context I am reminded of our people in Manipur who are being martyred for their faith in Christ. May our merciful God never allow them to see corruption, but make them touchstones of faith in Christ for the future generations.

As we know Mary was 'full of grace' - full of God himself and that she could enflesh the source of Grace - Jesus. In the same way, God has marked us with His image and likeness at our birth, then why do we give birth to impurities and ungodliness? Let's ask our beloved Mother to accompany us in our synodal journey to God

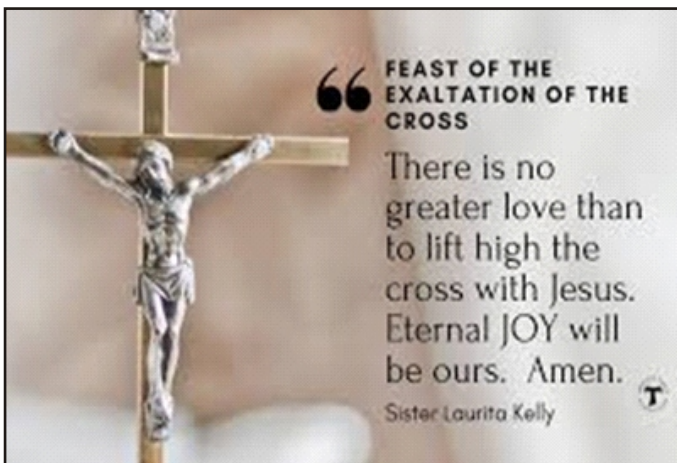


so that we may remain pure and resilient in the grace of God always singing the prophetic song of Mary. May her Assumption enable us to be people of Faith - to see as God sees, Hope - to choose as God chooses, and Love - to relate as God relates.

Sr. Lissy

The Feast of the Exaltation of the Cross

The Feast of the Exaltation of the Cross is celebrated on 14th September. On this day, we specially honour the Holy Cross on which Jesus died out of Love for us, and by His death on the Cross He brought Salvation to the World. The cross of Christ is the instrument of Love through which God saved us. The Cross because of what it represents is the most potent and universal symbol of



Christian faith. Once understood as an object of scorn and shame, now the Cross has become for us a sign of glory.

Sharing our human nature, like us in everything but sin, He went to an even lower level, accepting death and not any death, but death on a cross though totally innocent dying as a convicted criminal. He gave up everything: life, good name and all human dignity. All these show us how much God Loves us.

Adoration of the Cross is the adoration of Jesus Christ. God and man who suffered and died on this Roman instrument of torture to save us from sin and death. The Cross is a symbolic summary of passion, crucifixion, death and resurrection of Christ. This Cross today is the best-known religious symbol of Christianity. It reminds Christians of God's act of Love in Christ's sacrifice at Calvary where He gave His life for us.

Some Historical facts of the cross of Jesus

According to tradition, the Holy Cross was found by St. Helena about 180 Years after it had been buried by the

heathens. Out of aversion to Christianity they had done all in their power to conceal the place where it lay and where Jesus was buried. They had therefore heaped upon His Sepulchre a great quantity of stones and rubbish, and built a temple to Venus, so that those who came there to adore Him might seem to pay their worship to a marble idol. They had moreover erected a statue of Jupiter in the place where Jesus rose from the dead.

St. Helena, Emperor Constantine's mother being inspired with the great desire to find the Cross on which Jesus had suffered and died, came to Jerusalem, and ordered the profane building to be pulled down, the statue to be broken into pieces, and the rubbish to be removed. Digging to a great depth they discovered the Holy Sepulchre, and near it three crosses, the nails which had pierced our Saviour's body and the title which had been affixed to His Cross.

A miracle helped to identify the real Cross when a sick person was healed by its touch. St. Helena full of joy on having found the treasure which she had so earnestly sought, built a church on the spot, and placed the Cross there with great veneration. She afterwards carried a

part of it to Emperor Constantine who was then at Constantinople, who received it with great joy. Another part of the cross she carried to Rome to be placed in the Church which she built there, under the name of 'The Holy Cross of Jerusalem' where it remains to this day.

My Personal Reflections of the Cross of Christ

- For me personally the heavy cross that Jesus carried and was crucified on it, makes me to reflect the depth of God's Love for me and helps me to carry my daily little crosses cheerfully.
- Jesus' only desire was to accomplish the Father's will, namely to save mankind from sin and death by nailing it to the cross.... If my love for Jesus and for my people is deep enough, I must seek to do God's will cheerfully each day of my life. Jesus helps us to carry our daily crosses.
- If we love someone deeply, we are willing to undergo the pain for the sake of the one we love. Love feels no burden. Jesus took upon Himself the heavy Cross and was nailed to it and died when we were sinners. This is the greatest mystery of God's love. If He loved us, we also ought to love one another.

Sr. Sunita

Ten Characteristics of Ignatian Spirituality

1. Seeing God in All Things: God is in all things. He is with us at every moment. We need to be aware of His presence.

2. Companions of Jesus or Friendship with Jesus: God became human in Jesus so that we can be his friends or companions.

3. Discernment of spirits : What God wants for you. We need to pay attention to our own desires and feelings .Process of paying attention. Consolation and Desolation.

4. Indifference : About complete inner freedom. Does not mean apathy. Our deepest desire and feelings will lead us to God. We need to ignore the lesser fears, distractions and anxieties. The freedom to choose God,s love.

5. Heartfelt Spirituality: Has an emotional impact not just ethical or logical. Faith is not just belief in our heads but the feelings in our hearts as well.

6. Cura Personalis: God wants to be friends with who you really are. God works differently for different



people. No two people are alike in God,s eyes .There is no one size that fits all. God wants to attend to your individual needs and circumstances.

7. Ad Maiorem Dei Gloriam.: To the greater glory of God. We must pursue the Magis or The More, The Greater. This does not mean more activities, it could even mean less. It means that everything we do should be to

glorify God.

8. Contemplative in Action: Prayer or contemplation leads to action. Action is grounded in prayer and prayer leads to action. We must pray and then act upon what we prayed on.

9. Pilgrimage: Your whole life is a journey to God. We are not perfect in this life. We are on the way but not there yet.

10. Men and Women for Others: It means a deep commitment to social justice and radical giving to others.

Sr. Sandhya

Milestones in the History of Stella Maris School

This academic year 2023 - 2024 we have started Nursery in three divisions, Junior College with Commerce and Science Faculties and NIOS (National Institute of Open Schooling). Due to shortage of classrooms we are running Nursery and LKG in shifts. The Secondary School got an extension to accommodate the Junior College with all the ancillary rooms. NIOS is meant for the dropouts of other schools. May St. Ursula the patroness of education intercede for us.

New Beginnings at Maria Sadan, Jharsuguda

Psalm 91:4 "He will cover you with his feathers, and under his wings you will find refuge. His faithfulness will be your shield and rampart."

These words of the Psalmist came alive as we travelled back from Manipur where we had gone to bring children to Jharsuguda who were interested to carry on with their studies. Around 25 children of all ages along with a lady and her daughter who is a teacher travelled along with us. New life began for the children. One could see their smiling faces as they freely ran around and played, experiencing freedom to move and breathe fresh air. Having settled down and feeling at home, we started taking admissions to schools. On 4th August classes began. Sixteen children go to St Mary's school and nine to St Thomas' school. One could see the joy on their faces.

The children expressed their gratitude by saying, "*we lost everything and left our loved ones behind, but now you are our father, mother, and siblings.*" They are ever



grateful to all the Ursuline sisters for their reaching out to them in time of need and giving them a reason to live again in a peaceful atmosphere where they can study and enjoy life. We are ever grateful to Sr Marina and the councillors for supporting us in this venture. May God continue to bless us and bring to fruition the work He has begun.

Srs. Mercian & Jenifer

Excerpts from Sr. Rita's Common Letter dt. 16th Aug. 2023

1. Ursuline Synodal Journey-
Create Caring Communities
Love Tenderly
Be compassionate to women, girls, poor- Act Justly
Co-operate with God in everything.
(Micah 6:8)

2. For 2023-2024
3 provinces to reflect on:
Create Caring
Communities-Love
Tenderly

3. Reflect:
i) How am I able to create a caring community?
ii) How can I be a good community builder?

4. Mother Anne
said:
"In our community,
if peace and charity do
not reign supreme,
all God's designs
for us are ruined."

5

Global News

A Joyful Celebration Of 40th Religious Anniversary of Sr. Mary Shange Provincial Of African Province

"I am the true vine, you are the branches" [John 15:5]

We have been grafted into Him, to be branches on a vine which bears the loveliest of all the fruits of the earth especially our dear Sr. Mary Shange,. **Hearty Congratulations for successfully completing 40 years in religious life.**

The celebration began with a lively Eucharist. Bishop Sipuka the main celebrant in his homily emphasized on the true joy that emanates from being a faithful Religious.

Our hostel children went on to entertain all of us with a variety of activities. They really set the celebrative mood on fire. Our visitors from different corners felt welcomed and happy.

It was right and fitting to celebrate the anniversary of the religious profession of our Provincial. We are proud of Sr. Mary Shange & all that she has accomplished these forty years. We owe our thanks and appreciation for her, working tirelessly with love, commitment, dedication to keep alive our South African Province even though at times life is/was not so smooth yet she always rendered her service with affection, and tender care towards



each sister of our Province.

Sr. Mary has a vision for our African mission and she leaves no stone untouched to accomplish it by her dynamic personality. Her response to the situations, whether good or tough is met with calmness and magnanimity, and this makes a big difference in our lives. We love and uphold Sr. Mary Shange in great esteem for all the small and great acts she has performed and still performing in our African Mission, and the Society of St Ursula at large.

Sr. Celine

Jubilee Celebration in Brig

15th August was a wonderful feast day here in Brig. Five sisters celebrates their jubilee: Sr. Bonaventura remembered 70 years of professed life, Sr. Petra, Sr. Gemma and Sr. Carmen 60 years, and Sr. Modesta Golden Jubilee, i.e. 50 Years since her first vows. We are thankful that our Bishop himself, Bishop Lovey, presided at the feast celebration. And since we celebrated in our Convent Church, we also had festive music: flute and organ. We thank God for all that He has granted to us five sisters and through us to so many people around us. In addition, the day was an occasion for many good contacts with our relatives, as well as with friends from earlier times. Praise be to the Lord!

Sr. Petra and the Jubilarians



Bishop Jean Marie Lovey, Fr. Bruno Gmur, Fr. Schmidt, Sr. Nicole and Sr. Rita Jubilarians – Sr. Bonaventura, Sr. Petra, Sr. Carmen, Sr. Gemma, Sr. Modesta

Summer Activities

Forgetting what lies behind and striving forward to what lies ahead, I press on toward the goal for the prize of the heavenly call of God in Christ Jesus." Philippians 3:13b-14.

These words of Saint Paul were our inspiration to plunge into the summer activities. In every experience GOD helps and challenges us to see new things that the Lord is doing in our midst.

Yes, it was indeed a wonderful and an enriching experience with the children of different age groups. Around 400 children participated in six different camps. Three of which were conducted in our campus and the

others in three village schools and parishes. The themes for the camps were 'Colourful days' for the kindergarten children; 'Joyful days' for the Primary and village school children; 'Colour your world' for the high school children. This was a residential camp.

According to the themes the resource persons were invited and also various activities were conducted to bring out the best in each child. It was also wonderful to work in collaboration with the NGO's, the Red Cross, the Police and the Fire department who contributed in enlightening and helping the children.

The children and their parents were very happy for the



summer activities.

Abdul Kalam says, "We are all born with a divine fire in

us. Our efforts should be to give wings to this fire and fill the world with the glow of its goodness." Thus through these summer camps we too have put our efforts and enthusiasm together to fill the world of children with the glow of love and goodness.

We are grateful to each one of you dear sisters, our sisters in Brig and the benefactors for the material and spiritual support that we can work together to touch the young hearts.

Srs Joseline, Marie Therese, Diya

News from India Teachers' Day Celebrations

St. Ursula School, Varawade

Teachers' Day was celebrated in our school on 5th September 2023 on the occasion of the birth anniversary of Dr. Sarvapalli Radha Krishnan, The theme of the assembly was '**You are our Beacon of light**'

The teachers were welcomed with a loud applause and an arati and the programme began. This was followed by the lighting of the lamp. Sr Archana then garlanded the photo of Dr. Sarvapalli Radha Krishnan. The prayer Service was conducted to invoke the presence of God and ask to shower His immense blessings on our teachers. This was followed by a Prayer dance.

Various Programmes were then staged by the students. On this occasion the students showed their appreciation for their teachers through a speech, and a book mark,

Mrs. Aarti proposed the vote of thanks and appreciated the talents and hard work of our students. The P.T.A members too arranged games for the teachers and gave prizes to the winners.



Later, our sisters conducted a Prayer Service in the prayer room of the school. To appreciate the noble task of our teachers, a short video including the photos of individual teachers was shown on the screen. A Gift to all the teachers was given by the Management. This was followed by a sumptuous meal.

Respected Principal Sr. Jancy thanked all the teachers for their hard work and commitment..She said, "**Teachers are the beacons of light, As the beacon shows the way to ships on dark nights, so also the teacher shows the students how to walk on the right path.**" It was indeed a very happy and enjoyable day.

Sr. Jancy

Don Bosco School - Boisar

Teachers' play a pivotal role in shaping the lives of their students. They not only impart knowledge and wisdom, but also nurture the talents and aspirations by inculcating the values in the young minds. Their patience, compassion and commitment towards their profession make them the guiding light in moulding the future of our nation.

Keeping this in mind, on 5th September 2023, Don Bosco School, Boisar celebrated Teachers' Day with great great enthusiasm and zeal in appreciation for our



dedicated and committed teachers'. The entire day revolved on the theme "**TEACHERS ARE MIRACLE WORKERS,**"

Prior to the programme The students took on the role of teachers and taught different subjects. They were clad in beautiful suits and saris to match the personality of the teachers they were depicting.

The programme began with the teachers being brought in procession with Lazim (Dance). Students showered petals on them as a sign of welcome. The program began with the lighting of the lamp signifying God's presence followed by a prayer dance. A variety entertainment programme followed.

A speech on Dr..Radhakrishnan and his contribution to education was given by a student. She also appreciated the teachers for their valuable contribution in the field of education..

The entire programme was based on the values that the

students have learnt from their teachers and how the teachers have made a difference in their lives. Once the students went home, the School Management felicitated the teachers. Sr. Tanuja conducted games for the teachers and prizes were distributed by Sir Darryl

D'Mello and Mr. Brandon Almeida This was followed by a fellowship meal.

Thus, the entire celebration paved a new hope for teachers to continue their journey as Teachers.

Sr. Anuja

St. Ursula School Dabhan

The day began as we entered a beautifully decorated school with colourful balloons, banners, and flowers. One could feel the festive atmosphere in the air.

Before the assembly, the teachers entered their beautifully decorated classrooms. The students greeted the teachers with cards and small gifts as tokens of their love and appreciation.

It was a great privilege and honour for being so special on this auspicious and memorable day. The teachers were warmly welcomed with the school band as they entered the hall in procession. The assembly began with a prayer service thanking the Lord for the gift of their teachers. Students expressed their gratitude to the teachers who had touched their lives. Then followed a



variety entertainment which comprised of songs, jokes, dances, and a skit. After the assembly the students returned home. Then began the celebration with the teachers and Management. The teachers danced to their hearts content. Then followed the festive lunch.

It was an opportunity to engage in casual conversations and strengthen the bond between us. Each teacher was presented with a gift and a beautiful card as a token of love by the Management. The teachers felt blessed to work in such a beautiful institution where they are greatly respected. They expressed gratitude to God for making them a part of the Ursuline Family.

Overall, it was a day filled with appreciation, respect, and gratitude for our hard work and dedication.

Sr. Louisa

Girl Child Day Celebrations

St. Ursula - Borgaon

Every year the birthday of our beloved Mother Mary is celebrated on 8th September. The church in India dedicates this joyful day to every girl child.

This year we at Akola St. Ursula Study Centre, celebrated the event with our girls and co-workers. It was indeed a very happy day. As we conducted games for them like kho - kho, Bombing the city, Musical chairs etc. the girls thoroughly enjoyed themselves.

We then had the cake cutting, served delicious food followed by the prize distribution.

All our girls were extremely happy and grateful for the beautiful day.

The celebration ended with the thanksgiving Eucharistic celebration. Our parish priest Fr. George



appreciated our girls taking an active part in the liturgy.

We thank our beloved mother Mary who teaches us to be grateful to God for everything. She teaches us to proclaim, thank, praise and to appreciate God's goodness in our lives.

Bless us our Mother to live good and humble lives.

Sr. Karuna.

Shanti Ashram

"Work and no Play makes Jill a dull Girl"

Our co-workers are a blessing to us. They are always ready to be of service to us. To appreciate their services we organized the Girl-Child Day. Our candidates too were celebrated.



We began the celebration with a prayer-service in Hindi. We prayed for them and their families and also thanked God for the precious gift of our girls. The sisters organized games for them which they thoroughly enjoyed. They all got some very useful gifts which made them very happy. The fellowship meal was followed which was prepared by our sisters.

As we celebrate the birthday of Mother Mary let us pledge to change the situation of the girls in our communities first and then girls at large. Let us be the instruments of change, to give each girl the dignity and right to live.

Sr. Chaitrali